

**ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

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**OREGON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**P THE 620 MINISTRY IN EMERGING CULTURE  
(3 Credit Hours)**

**June 27-July 1, 2005**

**Earl G. Creps, Ph.D., D.Min.**

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**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course explores the potential of Pentecostal ministry in a rapidly morphing, globalized culture. The focus is on learning to discern culture as opportunity for cooperating with the mission of Jesus, and for discerning ministry as opportunity for Spirit-empowered expressions of that mission.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

Monday-Friday, June 27-July 1, 2005. See Camp schedule for specific times.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The course is an arena for personal growth of several kinds:

- *Character development:* **humbling** ourselves as the Spirit uses the twin instruments of culture and ministry to form greater dependence on God.
- *Cultural exegesis:* **interpreting** major forms of cultural influence that are creating the context in which the Christian gospel must be communicated.
- *Theological reflection:* **hearing** culture posing critical theological questions that call forth reflective skills that are true both to Scripture *and* context.
- *Personal reframing:* **seeing** personal and corporate ministry as an evolving, holistic calling rather than a set of static roles and functions.

- *Community formation*: **relating** to other believers in a community that simulates the challenge of integrating identity, mission, and context in field ministry.
- *Ministry enhancement*: **discerning** opportunities to cooperate with the Spirit in the fulfillment of Christ's mission through our own calling.
- *Ongoing growth*: **equipping** with self-sustaining skills that can inform all of the objectives above during future ministry.

### **COURSE READING OPTIONS**

Baker, Jonny, et al. *Alternative Worship: Resources from the Emerging Church*. Baker Books, 2004 (154 pages + CD)

Backman, Richard. *Bible and Mission: Christian Witness in a Postmodern World*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004. (128 pages)

Clapp, Rodney. *A Peculiar People: The Church as Culture in a Post-Christian Society*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1996. (248 pages)

Clegg, Tom, and Warren Bird. *Lost in America: How You and Your Church Can Impact the World Next Door*. Loveland, Colo.: Group, 2001. (176 pages)

Frost, Michael. *The Shaping of Things to Come: Innovation and Mission for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Church*. Hendrickson, 2003. (250 pages)

Gibbs, Eddie. *ChurchNext: Quantum Changes in How We Do Ministry*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2000. (249 pages)

Guder, Darrell. *The Continuing Conversion of the Church*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000. (222 pages)

Kimball, Dan. *Emerging Worship: Creating Worship Gatherings for New Generations*. El Cajon, Ca.: emergentYS, 2004. (238 pages)

Lindsley, Art. *True Truth: Defending Absolute Truth in a Relativistic World*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004. (180 pages)

McNeal, Reggie. *The Present Future: Six Tough Questions for the Church*. San Francisco: Jossey- Bass, 2003. (151 pages)

Miller, Donald. *Blue like Jazz*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2003.

Miller, Rex. *The Millennium Matrix: Reclaiming the Past, Reframing the Future of the Church*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004. (256 pages)

- Robinson, John. *Invading Secular Space: Strategies for Tomorrow's Church*. Kregel Publications, 2004. (224 pages)
- Romanowski, William D. *Eyes Wide Open: Looking for God in Popular Culture*. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2001. (171 pages)
- Roxburgh, Alan. *Crossing the Bridge: Church Leadership in a Time of Change*. Precept Group, 2000. (161 pages) [This is out of print, so look for it used.]
- Schultze, Quentin J. *High-Tech Worship: Using Presentational Technologies Wisely*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004. (112 pages)
- Stetzer, Ed. *Planting New Churches in a Postmodern Age*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2003. (384 pages)
- Sweet, Leonard, ed. *The Church in Emerging Culture: Five Views*. El Cajon, Ca.: emergentYS, 2003. (263 pages)
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Soul Tsunami: Sink or Swim in New Millennium Culture*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999. (446 pages)
- Sweet, Leonard, Brian McLaren and Jerry Haselmayer. *A Is for Abductive: The Language of the Emerging Church*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002. (338 pages)
- Webber, Robert E. *Ancient-Future Faith: Rethinking Evangelicalism for a Postmodern World*. Grand Rapids: Bake Books, 1999. (239 pages)
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Ancient-Future Evangelism: Making Your Church a Faith-Forming Community*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003. (219 pages)

## **COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY**

*Emerging Church/Emerging Culture: A Select Resource List* is available at my AGTS faculty web page. A downloadable pdf version is also available there.  
[http://www.agts.edu/faculty/faculty\\_publications/bibliographies/creps\\_bibliography/index.html](http://www.agts.edu/faculty/faculty_publications/bibliographies/creps_bibliography/index.html)  
 The free Acrobat reader required to read pdf files is available at:  
<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html>

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

- Mon., June 27      *Reality Check: The Arrival of Post-Christianity*  
 [Oral presentation of pre-session Reading Reflection papers]
- Tues., June 28      *Ozzie & Harriet Meet Ozzy & Sharon: Culture as Opportunity*

Wed., June 29	<i>On Two Wheels: Ministry in the Postmodern Turn</i>
Thurs., June 30	<i>Leading and Communicating in a De-centered World</i>
Fri., July 1	<i>Models of Ministry in Emerging Culture</i>

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### 1. Pre-session:

- a. *Read*: 1000 pages from the Course Reading Options list. No books read previously should be counted toward the course reading requirement. [A Reading Credit Report will be distributed on the last day of class to be returned with the post-session projects no later than Oct. 1, 2005. The percentage of reading completed will be multiplied by 150 points.]
- b. *Write*: of a Reading Reflection paper of 3-5 pages summarizing the key ideas from the pre-course reading that you found most important, disturbing, and/or enlightening. Summarize the key arguments briefly and then reflect on how they apply to your present or future ministry context. This paper is due on the first day of class, and is worth 150 points. Students will present an oral summary of their papers in class.

### 2. During the session:

- a. *Attend*: all course sessions. 100 points are available for attendance, with the distribution of points dependent on the percentage of the sessions attended. Students will report this percentage on the last day of class.
- b. *Participate*: in all classroom discussions, exercises, and projects.

### 3. Post-Session:

- a. *Field research*: visit a ministry actively engaged in reaching emerging culture. Keep a written journal of this experience (worth 100 points) to be turned in with other post-session assignments. Write a 7-10 page response to our field experiences integrating personal journals, course readings, class sessions, and personal reflection. The purpose of the paper is to use the experience to reflect on the nature of today's culture and the ministry that will be needed to reach it. 200 points are available for this paper. **Due date: October 1, 2005.**
- b. Choose *one* of the following options (300 points): **Due date: October 1, 2005.**
  - 1) *Produce a multi-media documentary*: on some significant feature of emerging culture and/or the ministry that is rising up to engage it. Examples

could include documenting a non-traditional local church in-depth, surveying and evaluating significant internet ministries, on-the-street interviews with “natives” of emerging culture, the influence of popular culture, sampling various preaching styles in non-traditional worship services, comparing young adult ministries, etc. Documentaries must be multi-media in format.

- 2) *Write a scenario*: depicting the development of a relatively new and significant cultural force, or a new ministry that addresses emerging culture. Examples could include a plan for church planting, the establishment of a web-based ministry, creating a ministry to post-moderns within an existing church, etc. Write a 10-page paper that presents your scenario in a credible way.
- 3) *Write an in-depth reading reflection*: read one of the Alternate Texts and write a 10-page paper that outlines the author's central thesis and responds to it in terms of your ministry context. This is to be a high-quality reflective essay, not a library research assignment.
- 4) *Devise a self-development plan*: write a 10-page paper detailing your plan for developing communication skills for ministry in emerging culture. This should include background research, personal growth, training, skill enhancements sought, implementation challenges, and a timeline.
- 5) *Create sermons*: using insights gained from the class/conference, write two sermons of significant length designed to reach a pre-Christian emerging culture audience. *Do not recycle old messages!* You may do either a manuscript, or a very, very detailed outline. While all sermons must be turned in hard copy, they may be accompanied by audiocassette and/or media support (e.g., PowerPoint, video clips, etc.) If you speak without notes, an audiocassette is required.
- 6) *Write a research paper*: choose a major theme related to the course and write a 10-page research paper. The paper should identify and reflect upon key ideas related to the topic, report on some of the major literature in the area, and apply conclusions to your ministry context. Supporting footnotes and a 15-item bibliography are required.
- 7) *Report on internet ministries*: research internet-based models of ministry and prepare a 10-page paper on your findings. The presentation should include a brief review of the literature, descriptions of the various models, web links, and other key features. Draw conclusions about their use of the internet itself, and the application (if any) of their ministry model to your own (i.e., what you learned from them that could be applied in your context).

- 8) *Design a multimedia project:* using the course/conference as a starting point, develop a brief multimedia (Web-based, PowerPoint, etc.) presentation that would accomplish either of two goals: making the emerging church comprehensible to the mainstream church, or, making the gospel comprehensible to a postmodern audience.
- 9) *Propose a self-designed project:* every student has the option of proposing one or more Self-Designed credit projects that relate specifically to a ministry or research interest relevant to the course subject matter. These projects must be approved in advance by the professor.

All written assignments are to be typed, double-spaced, represent high-quality, original, graduate-level work, and follow the *Turabian* style manual, 6<sup>th</sup> edition.

All assignments can be emailed to the professor ([ecreps@agts.edu](mailto:ecreps@agts.edu)) with a title page that includes your name, address, phone and email, course number, title, and site.

**Due date: October 1, 2005.** Grades for late work will be lowered by one letter grade for each week by which the project exceeds the deadline.

(*Note:* the participant will be charged a \$15 change-of-grade fee if work is turned in after the due date stipulated on the syllabus, even if permission has been given by the instructor.)

### **GRADING PROCEDURE**

	<u>Points</u>
Attendance	100
Required Reading Credit Report	150
Reading Reflection Paper	150
Field Research Journal	100
Field Research Reflection Paper	200
Post-Session Project Option	300

TOTAL POINTS AVAILABLE: 1000

Grading will be on a percentage basis, with 90% of the total points required for an A, 80% of the points required for a B, etc. Plusses and minuses will be used for point totals within 2% of any grade level.

### **SPECIFIC DATA**

Course syllabus prepared by Earl Creps, March 2005.